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Gunrunning witnesses to remain anonymous

NEW YORK (AP) — A prosecutor here is refusing to reveal before trial the names of those expected to testify against two men suspected of gunrunning because he fears for the safety of the witnesses.

"Frank Terpil and George Gregory Korkala are not ordinary defendants," according to Assistant District Attorney Matthew Crosson. "They have extraordinary experience in the technology and use of violence."

Terpil, for example, "trained the terrorist Ilyich Ramiriz Sanchez, known as Carlos, who is believed to have been responsible for the massacre at the Olympic Games in Munich in 1972," Crosson said.

"Korkala is known for dealing in arms and assassination devices to persons and groups with available cash, whoever and wherever they might be," Crosson said in papers on file in Manhattan Supreme Court.

The prosecutor said that witnesses "will incur substantial risk merely in attempting to testify at Terpil's trial. The court should not expose them to further risk by revealing their names and whereabouts to Frank Terpil before they testify."

Terpil, 40, is a former CIA agent now living in McLean, Va. Korkala, 38, lives in Nutley, N.J., where he owns a firm specializing in electronic security devices.

Both men were indicited in January on weapons possession, conspiracy and other charges for allegedly offering to sell machine guns to undercover investigators posing as Latin American revolutionaries.

The indictment was returned here because the original conspiracy to sell the guns took place during meetings in a Manhattan hotel, according to Crosson